EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The study of Indiana State Route 9 (SR 9) in and around the City of Greenfield in Hancock County, Indiana is being sponsored by the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Initiation of the study is in response to a congressional mandate as outlined in the 1998 TEA-21 legislation, Section 1602 Program for High Priority Demonstration Projects, under the item of "Construct a SR 9 Bypass in Greenfield".

The study is being directed by a management team of INDOT and FHWA through their consultant Paul I. Cripe, Inc. Stakeholder participation is coordinated through a Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) comprised of local government officials, economic development groups, local businesses, neighborhood groups, and other interested parties in the Greenfield and Hancock County areas. Additional public meetings are held to elicit general public comment.

The study is being conducted as an Environmental Assessment (EA) / Corridor Study in accordance to FHWA's *Indiana's Streamlined Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Procedures.* The general purpose of this study is to establish the central need and purpose for improvements along the corridor (the subject of this document), develop and analyze alternatives which will meet the need and purpose, and make recommendations for projects of independent utility (if any) which should be programmed for future development and study. Those projects identified for future development will be subject to further NEPA documentation as required (EIS, EA / FONSI, CE).

The ten mile wide area of study encompasses fourteen miles of SR 9 from US 52 to SR 234 and is centered around the City of Greenfield. SR 9 is classified in INDOT's 2001-2025 Long Range Plan as a Regional Corridor. Regional corridors serve as a connection to smaller cities (less than 25,000) and regions, and feed traffic to Statewide Mobility Corridors.

SR 9 currently serves as the primary north-south transportation corridor through the study area. Levels of service (LOS) through the corridor, based on current (1999) traffic volumes, indicate the roadway is operating generally at minimum acceptable levels. Major intersections through the corridor reveal similar operating levels. Future forecasted traffic volumes indicate the corridor will generally operate at below acceptable LOS levels in the design year of 2025.

These level of service deficiencies are found in both the more urban areas of SR 9, through the Greenfield city limits, and the rural areas north and south of the city.

An origin-destination study of the travel market within the study area, revealed that on a daily basis, only approximately 20% of the total heavy vehicle (truck) traffic entering the study area can be classified as "through" traffic, traffic which does not have an ultimate origin or destination in the Greenfield area (i.e. passing through the study area). Approximately 30 % of that traffic (6% of total) utilizes SR 9 exclusively in a north south movement through the area. This data reveals much of the travel market along SR 9 consists of local, intra-city movements.

Accident rates, primarily those involving property damage or injury, were generally near statewide averages for the rural portions of SR 9, outside the city limits. Markedly higher rates are currently being experienced in the more urban portions of the corridor.

The underlying need for improvements along the SR 9 corridor is based on forecasted deficiencies in overall services levels, and a current need to improve safety. The primary purpose of any selected improvements should attempt to achieve the following objectives and evaluation criteria:

- Improve Level of Service through the entire existing SR9 corridor within the study area to desirable levels
  - Improve LOS to "C" or better in rural areas
  - Improve LOS to "D" or better in urban areas

- Improve safety along the existing SR 9 corridor
  - Reduce predicted accident rates to below statewide averages

A secondary purpose of any improvements is to improve the local transportation system's ability to handle internal travel, primarily north-south movements across the area.

Preliminary alternatives include:

- New SR 9 Bypass (State Facility)
- Major expansion along existing SR 9
- Minor improvements along existing SR 9
- State System No Build (Local (off state system) improvements)
- No Action

These alternatives represent “families” of potential alternatives. Further development of alternatives prior to and during the screening process will be performed.

Multiple alternatives, utilizing various project phasing strategies, will also be considered to encompass potential short term and long term deficiencies.

A screening process will be developed to identify those alternatives which should be further developed. The primary screening process will serve to establish if there is a fundamental flaw (cost, engineering, environmental factor) or failure to meet the basic purpose and need requirements and goals. All alternatives will be consistently measured by these factors.